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A rendering of the new property set to be built at 21 Newton Street, the site of the former Leland Home. COURTESY PHOTO



The Leland Home had been in operation since 1879 before closing in 2020. WICKED LOCAL STAFF PHOTO/JESSE COLLINGS

Leland Home property to be demolished, redeveloped as senior living facility

Jesse Collings
Wicked Local
USA TODAY NETWORK

The site of the historic Leland Home at 21 Newton St. will remain a senior living facility, as the property will be converted into a larger living facility for residents aged 62 and up.

Waltham Zoning Board of Appeals granted a special permit to the owner of the property, who has plans to build a 68-unit facility on the site of the former Leland Home, built in 1879, which sits on a 1.5 acre lot.

“The project will be a full demolition with new construction. The building will be three stories, and will be a modern

living space, fully handicap accessible and highly sustainable,” said Lizbeth Heyer, vice president of 2 Life Communities.

The Leland Home had been in Waltham for more than 140 years. In July 2020, Deaconess Abundant Life Communities announced that they would be shutting the facility down later the year, with the remaining residents in the 39-bed facility being moved to other retirement homes.

The property was purchased by 2 Life Communities, a company that runs various 62+ facilities in Greater Boston, including Coleman House in Newton and Shillman House in Framingham.

The property will contain at

a minimum of 66 out of the 68 units that will be designated as affordable and only open to applicants who make 60% or less of the area median income. The project may contain even more affordable units, with 17 units potentially made exclusive to applicants who make 30% or less of the AMI and seven units exclusive to applicants who make 50% or less of the AMI.

The exact level of affordability within the property will be determined if the project is awarded state grants that Massachusetts offers to prospective builders that make providing affordable units more economical to developers.

“We have an active proposal submitted to the state, and we expect to hear back from that

in June. If the funding is granted, the plan is to start construction right about this time next year, and be completed by fall 2024,” Heyer said.

The property will be known as Leland House. Heyer said that 2 Life will continue to work with the Leland Home board to support programs that assist local seniors in need.

“The board will remain a part of the community and they have been great to work with,” Heyer said. “The building will keep things such as a portrait of Hannah Leland, who donated the land for senior housing back in the 1800s. Other artifacts from the common areas will be put on display inside the new building.”